

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 02712 170907Z
ACTION AGRE-00

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STATE PASS STR ELECTRONICALLY AND AGRICULTURE FOR SAYLOR

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EAGR, ETRD, JA, US
SUBJECT: STRAUSS-USHIBA FOLLOW-UP: BEEF TEAM

REF: STATE 40364

1. SUMMARY. ASST. AGATT DELIVERED LIST OF MEAT TEAM MEMBERS TO MAF, REQUESTED APPOINTMENT FOR TEAM WITH MINISTER AND CONFIRMED TEAM PLANS ARRIVE MAR. 13. MEAT AND EGG DIV. DIRECTOR SAID MAF HAD VIRTUALLY NO TIME TO MEET WITH TEAM AND PREFERRED APRIL BECAUSE WILL BE ENGAGED IN PREPARATION APRIL 1 ANNOUNCEMENT MEAT PRICE SUPPORTS FOR JFY 78 BUT TENTATIVELY AGREED TO VISIT AND TO FACILITATE CONTACTS WITH OTHER GROUPS PROVIDED IT UNDERSTOOD MAF'S PARTICIPATION IN THIS FIRST VISIT WOULD BE MINIMAL. MAF WILL CONFIRM THIS TENTATIVE AGREEMENT NEXT WEEK. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS TEAM COME AS SCHEDULED.

2. ON FEB. 17 ASST. AGATT CALLED ON INTL. AFFAIRS DIV. (ENDO) AND DIRECTOR, MEAT AND EGG DIV. MOTAI TO DELIVER LIST OF MEAT TEAM MEMBERS, CONFIRM THAT TEAM PLANS ARRIVE MAR. 12 FOR FULL WEEK PROGRAM BEGINNING MARCH 13, AND REQUEST APPOINTMENT FOR TEAM WITH MINISTER NAKAGAWA.

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3. MOTAI SAID THAT HIS DIVISION AND OTHER KEY OFFICIALS INVOLVED WITH BEEF WERE FULLY COMMITTED ALREADY TO WORK NIGHT AND DAY THAT WEEK TO PREPARE JFY 1978 BEEN AND PORT SUPPORT PRICES WHICH MUST BE ANNOUNCED APRIL 1 AND THAT MAF WOULD PREFER TEAM COME IN APRIL. WE POINTED OUT THAT TEAM HAD ALREADY BEEN DELAYED A MONTH AT MINISTRY'S REQUEST AND THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO HAVE THE VISIT WEEK OF MARCH 13. MOTAI THEN TENTATIVELY AGREED TO THE

FOLLOWING FORMULATION OF MAF'S POSITION BUT SAID HE WOULD HAVE TO CONSULT FURTHER INTERNALLY BEFORE THIS COULD BE CONFIRMED:
"MAF CAN AGREE TO VISIT OF MEAT TEAM WEEK OF MARCH 13 IF IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT MAF'S TIME AVAILABLE TO MEET WITH TEAM EXTREMELY LIMITED DUE TO SUPPORT PRICE EXERCISE. MOTAI PERSONALLY WILL CALL OTHERS IN LIPC AND TRADE WITH WHOM TEAM WILL MEET TO ENSURE THAT MEETINGS WILL BE SUBSTANTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE. ESSENTIAL FOLLOW-UP WITH MAF ON RESULTS THIS INITIAL VISIT COULD THEN COME AT LATER DATE AFTER TEAM HAD DIGESTED AND ANALYZED DATA AND MARKET INFORMATION OBTAINED ON THIS INITIAL VISIT. ALTERNATIVELY MAF COULD RECEIVE TEAM AND PARTICIPATE FULLY IN PROGRAM IF TEAM CAME WEEK OF APRIL (?)"

3. ALTHOUGH WE DON'T EXPECT CONFIRMATION OF EVEN THE TORTUOUS FORMULATION ABOVE UNTIL NEXT WEEK, WE SUGGEST TEAM CONSIDER PLANS FIRM TO ARRIVE MARCH 12 AS SCHEDULED. HOWEVER, SUGGEST THAT THERE BE NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM WASHINGTON SIDE UNTILE WE HAVE CONFIRMATION FROM MAF.

4. WE WOULD BE SATISFIED WITH FORMULATION PARA. 3 BECAUSE ON INITIAL VISIT IT IS CONTACTS WITH INDUSTRY WHICH WILL BE MOST MEANINGFUL. WE WILL ADVISE ON MAF DECISION AS SOON AS RECEIVED.
MANSFIELD

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